

VZCZCXRO5463  
OO RUEHAG RUEHFL RUEHLA RUEHMRE RUEHROV RUEHSR  
DE RUEHNO #0317/01 2481642  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 041642Z SEP 08  
FM USMISSION USNATO  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2212  
INFO RUEHXP/ALL NATO POST COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
RUCNOSC/ORG FOR SECURITY CO OP IN EUR COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE 0365  
RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD IMMEDIATE 0628  
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA IMMEDIATE 0442  
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE 0593  
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL IMMEDIATE 1007  
RUEHKH/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM IMMEDIATE 0444  
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE 6089  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE 0425  
RUEHGP/AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE IMMEDIATE 0228  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE 0745  
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON IMMEDIATE 0292  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 0796

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 06 USNATO 000317

NOFORN  
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/04/2018  
TAGS: [NATO PREL AF](#)  
SUBJECT: READOUT: SEPTEMBER 3 NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL  
MEETING

Classified By: Classified by Acting Deputy Chief of Mission Walter S. R  
eid for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C/NF) SUMMARY FROM THE NAC:

-- AFGHANISTAN: The SYG reviewed his September 1 phone conversation with President Karzai, who said civilian casualties were now "beyond the tolerance and comprehension of the Afghan people." The SYG said he underscored that NATO is making every effort to avoid civilian casualties and he suggested that it was time for Afghan officials, UNAMA, and NATO military commanders to sit down and see how we could do better. SACEUR addressed the NAC on what he saw as major challenges facing ISAF and called for greater international engagement with Pakistan, increasing ISAF latitude to fight narcotics, and better coordination on development. The new NATO Senior Civilian Representative (SCR) in Kabul, Ambassador Fernando Gentilini, joined the NAC via VTC and spoke briefly about the security perception among Afghans and the upcoming elections. PermReps expressed concerns about civilian casualties and the damage they inflict of Afghan perceptions of ISAF and their own domestic public support for ISAF. Several nations supported SACEUR's call for greater authority to fight narcotics, but the French, German, Dutch and Italian PermReps aired reservations. In closing, SYG mentioned that SRSG Kai Eide would be available to address the NAC on his way back from the UNGA. He also stated that after the JCMB the NAC would discuss the United States, non-paper on a new ANA trust fund.

--BALKANS: The Turkish PermRep expressed his disappointment at references by other Allies to "blockage by one country" to NATO-EU relations during a meeting that morning with other non-NATO KFOR troop contributing countries. He said NAC discussion on that topic should be for "Allies Ears Only." He highlighted Turkey's support for practical cooperation in the field between EU and NATO, but reiterated Turkey's position that formal arrangements between the two organizations must be approved by the NAC.

--STATEMENTS ON POLITICAL SUBJECTS: France briefed EU progress on developing a counter-piracy effort. UK, with SYG support, called for NATO-EU mil-to-mil information sharing. France called for a NATO-EU High Level Group meeting.

--AOB: The SYG's attempt to confirm decisions among Perm Reps on next steps with Russia in light of their informal conversation the day before revealed no consensus on whether to proceed with a NATO-Russia Committee PrepCom. The Senior Political Committee was tasked with continuing the discussion over which activities to continue with Russia and which to suspend.

END SUMMARY.

-----  
AFGHANISTAN  
-----

12. (C/NF) SYG TELECON WITH KARZAI: The SYG reported on his September 1 phone conversation with President Karzai on civilian casualties. Karzai stated the issue was getting "beyond the tolerance and comprehension of the Afghan people" and they were starting to question whether this was a war against terrorism or against them. The SYG replied by underscoring that NATO is making every effort to avoid civilian casualties and that every such tragic event is one too many. He also commented that prolonging any public debate on civilian casualties would only benefit the Taliban. The SYG suggested that it was time for Afghan officials, UNAMA and NATO military commanders to sit down and see how we could do better.

13. (C/NF) The SYG noted that the September 4 NAC meeting with Defense Minister Wardak could be an opportunity to

USNATO 00000317 002 OF 006

discuss what practical operational steps we could take on the basis of the existing exchange of letters and Military Technical Agreement, rather than opening complicated discussions on a full SOFA.

14. (C/NF) SACEUR ON SECURITY SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN: SACEUR addressed the NAC on what he saw as major challenges facing ISAF in the areas of security, governance, and development. He said security is inhibited by political instability, the funding of the Taliban via narcotics, and the existence of safe havens in Pakistan. He recommended greater high level civilian and continuing Tripartite Commission mil-to-mil engagement with Pakistan and increasing ISAF's authorities to fight the narcotics trade. He said poor governance is undermining the Afghan government's credibility with the people and that the Karzai government is willing to overlook corruption in the interests of its own political survival. He called for the international community to demand more strongly that local authorities crack down on corruption. In the area of development, SACEUR said he had seen no improvement in coordination between military forces, the Afghanistan government, and non-governmental organizations. He called for continued support for UN SRSR Eide as he tries to improve coordination.

15. (C/NF) SACEUR reported that over the past year there has been a 52 percent increase in significant activities (SIGACTS). 74 percent of SIGACTS occurred in only ten districts, however, primarily in RC-E and RC-S. Opposing Militant Forces (OMF) continue to focus on asymmetric attacks and Improvised Explosive Device (IED) attacks are up 51 percent over last year and attacks on lines of communication (LOC) are up 49 percent. OMF are reacting to the increase in ISAF and ANSF forces by exploiting the permissive environment in Pakistan, using high profile attacks for propaganda purposes, and seeking to undermine reconstruction and development. It is not all bad news though: ISAF is 54 percent more effective in finding and countering IEDs, better training was the way to counter IESs, he underlined, ISAF has increased checkpoints along the ring road to counter LOC attacks, there has been no coordinated effort against Kabul, and the OMF are unable to encircle or isolate Kabul.

¶6. (C/NF) SACEUR said the current Combined Joint Statement of Requirements (CJSOR) no longer represents the state of forces required on the ground in Afghanistan. An updated CJSOR should be out next month ahead of the November Global Force Generation Conference. He reported that caveats continue to hinder ISAF operations. After the Bucharest Summit there was some improvement, but there are still 70 caveats impacting COMISAF's ability to fight OMF in Afghanistan.

¶7. (C/NF) SACEUR said ANA forces are now leading 70 percent of operations against OMF. He said he believed there is valid requirement for expanding the ANA to 122,000. He stressed that NATO must support this action. Additionally, the Alliance must field the required Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams (OMLTs) that this expansion will require. SACEUR reported that ANP development is 2 to 3 years behind that of the ANA and called for the international community to step up in the ANP development process.

¶8. (C/NF) SACEUR said it is clear that narcotics fund the insurgency and fuel corruption in Afghanistan. Afghan counter-narcotics forces can only respond to 1 in 4 narcotics targets. Afghan capabilities will remain minimal for the next 1 to 2 years. ISAF must be authorized to take more action in combating narcotics until Afghans have more adequately developed their own indigenous capability. Regarding expanding ISAF's counter-narcotics mission, SACEUR said, &the increased tactical authority will achieve a strategic level affect.8 SACEUR said he will bring this issue to the Chiefs of Defense in their meeting later this

USNATO 00000317 003 OF 006

month.

¶9. (C) POLITICAL UPDATE BY SENIOR CIVILIAN REP IN KABUL: The new NATO Senior Civilian Representative (SCR) in Kabul, Ambassador Fernando Gentilini, reported via VTC that Afghans are concerned with security throughout all of the country, but Kabul does not feel encircled as some press had reported.

Regarding security he feels there is an economic dimension and an insurgency dimension. International and social outreach programs are showing some positive effect on the economic dimension. Regarding the insurgency dimension, the gap between the government and the Afghan people is hurting everyone's ability to fight the insurgency.

¶10. (C) The SCR stated the elections appear to be on track. Voter registration will be an indicator of how well the election process is proceeding. The SCR believes the election is an occasion to turn around the political process and re-energize the Afghan people's support for the government.

¶11. (C) PERM REP COMMENTS: The Norwegian PermRep stressed the need to avoid public debate over reporting on the numbers of civilian casualties. He also thought that COMISAF should not be commenting on incidents that did not involve ISAF forces (Shindand) as this would only confuse the issue. Lastly, he recommended SYG discuss items of common concern with the UN when he travels to the UNGA. The Belgian PermRep echoed the need to agree on converging opinions among the UN and NATO before going public with items lik civilian casualties.

¶12. (C) The Canadian ermRep suggested that since the war in Afghanistan is in reality a communications war, there should be a standing commission among ISAF, the Afghan government, and the UN to close the gap on information issues. He also suggested the Tri-partite Commission develop an agenda for future meetings to draw Pakistan further into the ISAF agenda (SACEUR agreed).

¶13. (C) The Turkish PermRep called for more open and frank discussions on what Afghans believe NATO can be doing to improve ISAF operations. He also once again called for the

Council to develop talking points for the SYG to carry forward on his visit to Pakistan next month. The UK seconded the Turkish call and said it soon would circulate its own Pakistan thinking as a contribution.

¶14. (C) The German PermRep also remarked that COMISAF comments on OEF operations were not helpful in preventing public confusion and adverse public opinion; especially in his nation where parliament is on the eve of renewing their Afghanistan Mandate. He stated that despite SACEUR,s convincing case about the need to address the narcotics issue, he was not convinced it should be ISAF that does it and said he failed to see the need to amend the OPLAN.

¶15. (C) The UK PermRep believes there is a definite need to amend the OPLAN regarding counter-narcotics and requested counter-narcotics be placed on a future Council agenda. He also supported not publicly arguing over civilian casualty numbers and favored developing a process to coordinate converging opinions prior to press releases. The UK PermRep supports SYG in avoiding the development of a SOFA with Afghanistan. He recommended working with the UN to get SRSG Kai Eide to address the NAC and in turn NATO working harder to produce more timely and comprehensive reports to the UNSCR.

¶16. (C) The Italian PermRep stated it was impossible to avoid debate on casualty numbers if there are differences in these numbers and rhetoric from Afghanistan is not helpful as they react before even knowing what has happened. He stated that in regards to counter-narcotics operations, Italy is on the cautious side and supports doing everything available

USNATO 00000317 004 OF 006

within the existing OPLAN. The Italian PermRep also stated support for expanding the ANA force in order to strengthen security; however, he hoped this will not negatively effect the development of the ANP.

¶17. (C) Ambassador Volker stated the United States strongly supports the expansion of the ANA and invited future discussion of the ANA Trust Fund Non-paper circulated earlier this week by the U.S. He supported SACEUR,s points on enhancing ISAF counter-narcotics operations and changing the OPLAN as necessary. Ambassador Volker commented that civilian casualty public perception is exaggerated, but said NATO focus should be on a remedy and way ahead. He called for close coordination among ISAF, the Afghan government, and UNAMA. Lastly he called attention to the new Tactical Directive published by COMISAF; stating that it is a positive step toward responding to the civilian casualty issue.

¶18. (C) The Dutch Charg agreed that entering discussions of a SOFA with Afghanistan amid the civilian casualty issues would send a negative image. He supported SYG comments of working within the existing Military Technical Agreement. Regarding ISAF counter-narcotics operations, he stated all ISAF operations should only be in support of Afghan-led operations. The Dutch Charg was concerned that the expansion of the ANA is an answer to the shortcomings of the Afghan government. The focus should be on ANP instead of ANA. He is eager to discuss the implications on NATO for the proposed ANA expansion.

¶19. (C) The Bulgarian PermRep stated his country,s support for the expansion of the ANA. The French PermRep agreed with her Dutch colleague in that the fight against narcotics must remain the responsibility of the Afghans. She also warned against the political ramifications of civilian casualties related to enhancing ISAF,s role in counter-narcotics. The Spanish PermRep agreed with others that we must avoid public debate of civilian casualty numbers. He supported the expansion of ANA as a further step toward &Afghanization.8 The Polish PermRep shared SACEUR,s perspective, especially that concerning expansion of the ISAF counter-narcotics mission.

¶20. (C) The Czech Republic's PermRep stated that COMISAF's Tactical Directive should be echoed by Commander CENTCOM as was the case in 2007 when Gen McNeill issued his Tactical Directive. (Note: SACEUR said he would pursue this.)

¶21. (C) CLOSING COMMENTS: SACEUR closed by commenting that he is closely monitoring the upswing of civilian casualties and indicated that lately there has been a lot more activity / troops in contact requiring close air support. He further stated that he is focusing his efforts to ensure the internal process of applying force and then reporting incidents is right. He feels that COMISAF's new Tactical Directive is a first step in the right direction. He reminded the Council that the only counter-narcotics mission expansion he is asking for is the interdiction of drug processing facilities and drug traffickers. He said ISAF is already doing all it can in counter narcotics under the existing OPLAN and "was at a loss" to see what more it could do without revisions. Lastly, he stated he would like to see ISAF help to revive the Afghan Development Zones concept via development zone identification from the Afghans. He commented ISAF should support development, not the other way around, as advised by UNAMA.

¶22. (SBU) In the wrap up of the Afghan agenda item, SYG mentioned that SRSK Kai Eide would be available to address the NAC on his way back from the UNGA. SYG will schedule this event. He also stated that after the JCMB the NAC would discuss the US Non-paper on a new trust fund.

-----  
BALKANS

USNATO 00000317 005 OF 006

-----  
¶23. (C) The Secretary General asked if anyone had any additional issues to raise on the Balkans which were not sufficiently addressed in the earlier KFOR Troop Contributing Nations NAC session with former COMKFOR Gen. Marnhac that morning. Turkey was the only country to take the floor. The Turkish PermRep felt that the earlier NAC discussion addressed issues that should have been for 'Allies Ears Only' and expressed disappointment that there was wide discussion on Revision 3 of the OPLAN and that references to 'blockage by one country' were uncalled for. The Turkish PermRep then reminded Council that Turkey has demonstrated flexibility throughout the process and that the briefings to the NAC by EULEX Head of Mission de Kermabon and outgoing COMKFOR LTG Marnhac were sobering reminders that there are still uncertainties that must be resolved before a change to the OPLAN can proceed.

¶24. Africa: No discussion

¶25. Iraq: No discussion

¶26. Response to Terrorism: No discussion

-----  
STATEMENTS ON POLITICAL SUBJECTS  
-----

¶27. (C) The French PermRep reported on the EU Summit meeting of foreign ministers, held in Brussels on Monday, Sept 1, to discuss the EU position on Georgia/Russia issues. The EU ministers expressed their concern about the situation in Georgia, especially the dire humanitarian consequences, and condemned Russia's unilateral recognition of independence in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. She reported that President Sarkozy, in his capacity as President of the European Council, will go to Moscow on September 8, accompanied by the President of the Commission and the High Representative.

¶28. (C) The French PermRep also reported on the EU PSC meeting of September 2 to discuss the issue of piracy in the

Horn of Africa region. She reported that the EU is quickly developing its strategy and is examining how best to coordinate its anti-piracy efforts with the other international organizations. CTF-150, as well as the future SNMG-2 were noted, as the EU strived to structure its own mission to the region. She reported that PSC members encouraged an improved dialogue between the EU and NATO on the anti-piracy issue, and that a meeting of High Level Group (HLG) officials from both organizations was proposed. The SYG, nodding at the Turkish PermRep, said he would consider how to respond to the HLG idea. The UK PermRep strongly supported the proposal for enhanced EU-NATO cooperation, adding that experts from both organizations should be talking informally right now.

129. (C) The French PermRep informed the NAC that both the Georgia/Russia and anti-piracy issues would be taken up again during the Gymnich meeting to be held in Avignon on September 5-6.

-----  
ANY OTHER BUSINESS  
-----

130. (C) SYG informed the NAC that he has asked D/ASYG Bob Simmons to compile a list of possible NATO assistance to Georgia.

131. (C) The SYG continued with a summary of the way forward regarding Russia. He noted broad support for a NRC PrepCom meeting after the NAC trip to Georgia, with a tentative date of September 19 for the meeting. He noted that procedural rules required both a second PrepCom meeting, tentatively scheduled for September 30, as well as a meeting on September

USNATO 00000317 006 OF 006

17 to coordinate the first NRC PrepCom meeting. He pointedly referred to a tasking for the Senior Political Committee (SPC) to discuss the relative value for any meetings of the NRC sub-committees.

132. (C) The Czech PermRep quickly intervened to agree with the overall way forward proposed by the SYG, but to also highlight his impression that all NRC meetings are now canceled. Ambassador Volker also weighed in on this subject, saying that he did not agree to the way forward on the NRC PrepCom meetings at this time, and noting that since there was not agreement at the NAC, Allies should not communicate any way forward with the Russians. He also argued that, at a minimum, no decision on holding a PrepCom should be made until after the NAC trip to Georgia.

133. (C) The German PermRep strongly countered that he did not recall "anything close to consensus" regarding the suspension of the NRC meetings. He urged a case-by-case review of all activities between NATO and Russia, and concluded by saying that he never agreed to the SPC establishing guidelines for engaging the Russians.

134. (C) The Canadian PermRep reminded Allies that the Foreign Ministers agreed that there would be "no business as usual" with Russia, so how can we revert to business as usual now, he asked. He further queried as to why the NAC would agree to a September 19 PrepCom before it made the visit to Georgia?

135. (C) The UK PermRep highlighted a number of working groups scheduled to meet next week, so some decisions do have to be made now, and that was why the SPC was tasked with providing guidelines. The French PermRep suggested that the NAC wait until President Sarkozy returns from Moscow before making any decisions. A few other PermReps intervened before a clearly exasperated SYG declared that Allies were simply reiterating positions that had been elaborated upon during the PermReps informal discussion on the topic yesterday. He saw no need to continue the discussion, and asked PermReps to

conclude the meeting in light of the late hour and upcoming NAC. The SPC was scheduled to deliberate later in the week on further NRC committee modalities. (Note: Deputies will take up the issue on Sept. 4. End Note.)

VOLKER  
VOLKER